

SENATE—Wednesday, May 9, 2001

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TIM HUTCHINSON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Gracious Father, thank You for the gifts of life, intellect, good memories, and daring dreams. We do not ask for challenges equal to our talent and training, education and experience; rather, we ask for opportunities equal to Your power and vision. Forgive us when we pare life down to what we could do on our own without Your power. Make us adventuresome, undaunted people who seek to know what You want done and attempt it because You will provide us with exactly what we need to accomplish it. We thank You that problems are nothing more than possibilities wrapped in negative attitudes. We commit the work of this day to You and will attempt great things for You because we know we will receive great strength from You. You are our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable TIM HUTCHINSON led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. THURMOND).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 9, 2001.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TIM HUTCHINSON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

STROM THURMOND,
President pro tempore.

Mr. HUTCHINSON thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The distinguished acting majority leader.

SCHEDULE

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, today the Senate will have 5 minutes to complete debate on a Mikulski amendment regarding community technology centers, with a vote to occur at approximately 9:35 a.m.

Following the vote, the Senate will continue to debate those amendments pending or any newly offered amendments to the education bill. The Senate will suspend debate on S. 1 as soon as the papers to the budget conference report are received from the House. Further votes will occur this morning on education amendments. It is expected that a vote on the budget conference report will occur either late this evening or tomorrow morning. As a reminder, all first-degree amendments to the education bill must be filed by 5 p.m. this evening.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

BETTER EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS ACT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. 1, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1) to extend programs and activities under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

Pending:

Jeffords amendment No. 358, in the nature of a substitute.

Kennedy (for Murray) amendment No. 378 (to amendment No. 358), to provide for class size reduction programs.

Kennedy (for Mikulski/Kennedy) amendment No. 379 (to amendment No. 358), to provide for the establishment of community technology centers.

Kennedy (for Dodd) amendment No. 382 (to amendment No. 358), to remove the 21st century community learning center program from the list of programs covered by performance agreements.

McConnell amendment No. 384 (to amendment No. 358), to provide for teacher liability protection.

Cleland amendment No. 376 (to amendment No. 358), to provide for school safety enhancement, including the establishment of the National Center for School and Youth Safety.

Biden amendment No. 386 (to amendment No. 358), to establish school-based partnerships between local law enforcement agencies and local school systems, by providing

school resource officers who operate in and around elementary and secondary schools.

Specter modified amendment No. 388 (to amendment No. 378), to provide for class size reduction.

Voinovich amendment No. 389 (to amendment No. 358), to modify provisions relating to State applications and plans and school improvement to provide for the input of the Governor of the State involved.

Carnahan amendment No. 374 (to amendment No. 358), to improve the quality of education in our Nation's classrooms.

AMENDMENT NO. 379

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. We have 5 minutes equally divided on the Mikulski amendment.

The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise to ask the support of my colleagues for my amendment to create 1,000 community tech-based centers around the country.

The BEST Act creates a national goal to ensure that every child is computer literate by the 8th grade regardless of race, ethnicity, income, gender, geography, or disability.

My amendment will help make this goal a reality.

What does this amendment do? My amendment builds on the excellent work of Senator JEFFORDS, Senator KENNEDY, and Senator GREGG. It expands 21st Century Learning Centers by authorizing \$100 million to create 1,000 community based technology centers around the country. The Department of Education would provide competitive grants to community based organizations such as a YMCA, the Urban League, or a public library.

Up to half the funds for these centers must come from the private sector, so we'll be helping to build public/private partnerships around the country.

What does this mean for local communities? It means a safe haven for children where they could learn how to use computers and use them to do homework or surf the web. It means job training for adults who could use the technology centers to sharpen their job skills or write their resumes.

Why is this amendment necessary? Because even with dot coms becoming dot bombs, we badly need high tech workers. In fact, we have a skill shortage, not a worker shortage.

Senators SPECTER and HARKIN have provided funds for Community Technology Centers in Appropriations but the program has never been authorized, so it has been skimpy. Only 90 centers were created last year, although over 700 applied.

We need to bring technology to where kids learn, not just where we want them to learn. They don't just learn in